

Historic District Review Committee

Staff Report July 12, 2010

Action Item

CAPP 2010-0017 Waterford Foundation-Waterford Real Estate: Retroactive Application for a Sign in the Waterford Historic District: MCPI 303-26-6725.

Background

This retroactive application is for a projecting sign on the subject property, Waterford Real Estate, at 15481 Second Street in the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District (Figure 1). Waterford Real Estate is located in a one-story infill addition between a commercial building to the north that historically served as the Tin Shop and a residence to the south that historically served as a livery stable. Of frame construction, it is clad with German siding (Photo 1).

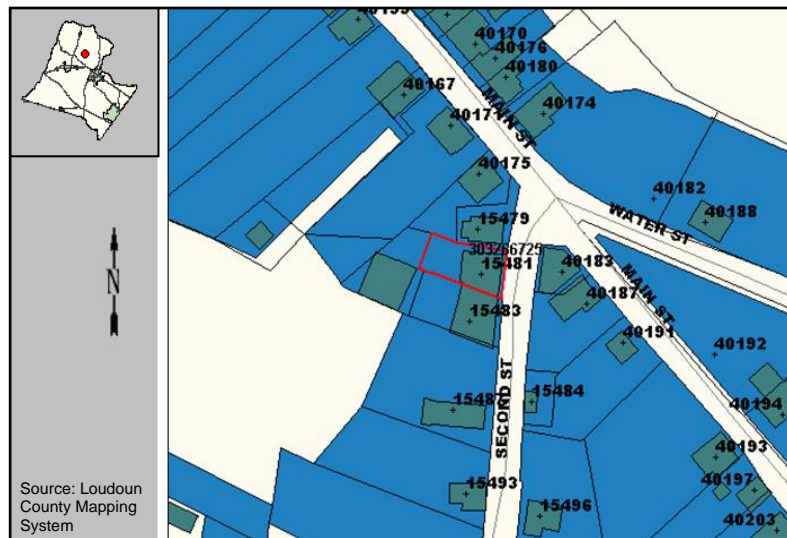


Figure 1: Subject property, 15481 Second Street, Waterford.

According to the Zoning Referral letter dated July 2, 2010, there are no zoning issues associated with this application.

Analysis

The sign is evaluated against Chapter 8 of the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Waterford Historic District (Waterford Guidelines), which specifically addresses signs. Photo 2 depicts the sign.

Design, Compatibility, and Execution

The sign design and bracket should reinforce and relate to the architectural character and era of the building while fitting into the building's design in a manner that does not



Photo 1: Waterford Real Estate, 15481 Second Street, Waterford, Virginia.



Photo 2: Detail of the Waterford Real Estate sign.

obscure architectural elements. The sign should be readable and convey an image appropriate for the business. The Guidelines recommend employing design and sign professionals (*Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for Signs: Design, Compatibility, and Execution, Guidelines 1-4, p. 134*).

The sign is a projecting sign attached by a bracket to the front elevation of the building between the entrance and a singular window. This location does not obscure architectural features. The bracket is metal with a simple scroll design, typical of sign brackets and ubiquitous in Waterford (see Photo 2). The 20 inch-wide by 8 inch-high sign with a simple, imageless design provides enough room for readable text.

Size and Number

The Waterford Guidelines recommend limiting the number of signs to two or three, with only one wall sign per street frontage, to reduce visual clutter and be compatible with the building. The total size limit for all commercial signs per building is 50 square feet (*Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for Signs: Size and Number, Guidelines 1-3, p. 134*).

This application is for one projecting sign measuring just over 1 square foot (20"x8"), which meets the Guidelines for size and the recommended number of signs.

Shape, Color, Materials, and Lighting

The sign shape should be appropriately shaped for its location, utilizing colors that complement the building. Traditional sign materials are recommended (*Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for Signs: Shape, Color, Materials, and Lighting, Guidelines 1, 3, 4, p. 135*). Staff notes that the existing sign is not illuminated.

The rectangular sign shape is typical of small projecting signs. The sign material is wood, a traditional sign material. The edges are finished with a simple narrow coping. The bracket is metal, also made a traditional material.

The sign is white with black lettering and a red border. The simple red border makes the sign stand out against the background of the building painted in neutral colors.

Lettering Styles

The Guidelines suggest considering a font style that relates to the era of the building's architecture and is easy to read from a distance (Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for Signs: Lettering Styles, Guidelines 1-2, p. 135).

The font style is simple, timeless, and complementary to the sign design. The simplicity makes it legible from a distance. The font does not necessarily reflect the building era; however, it informs visitors to the historic district that this is a contemporary business.

Projecting Signs

Projecting signs should not exceed 10 square feet. The sign should be attached to the first floor wall or a porch column (Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for Signs: Projecting Signs, Guidelines 1 and 3, p. 137).

The sign is 1.11 square feet in size and attached to the first floor wall, meeting the Guidelines.

Findings

1. The design, font style and size, size, number, shape, color, materials, and location of the projecting sign and bracket meet the Waterford Guidelines.

Recommendation

Staff recommends retroactive approval of the application.

Suggested Motions

1. *I move that the Historic District Review Committee retroactively approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2010-0017 for a projecting sign at 15481 Second Street in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the findings included on page 3 of the staff report dated July 12, 2010.*
2. *I move that the Historic District Review Committee retroactively approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2010-0017 for a projecting sign at 15481 Second Street in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the findings included on page 3 of the staff report dated July 12, 2010...and with the following conditions...*
3. *I move alternate motion...*